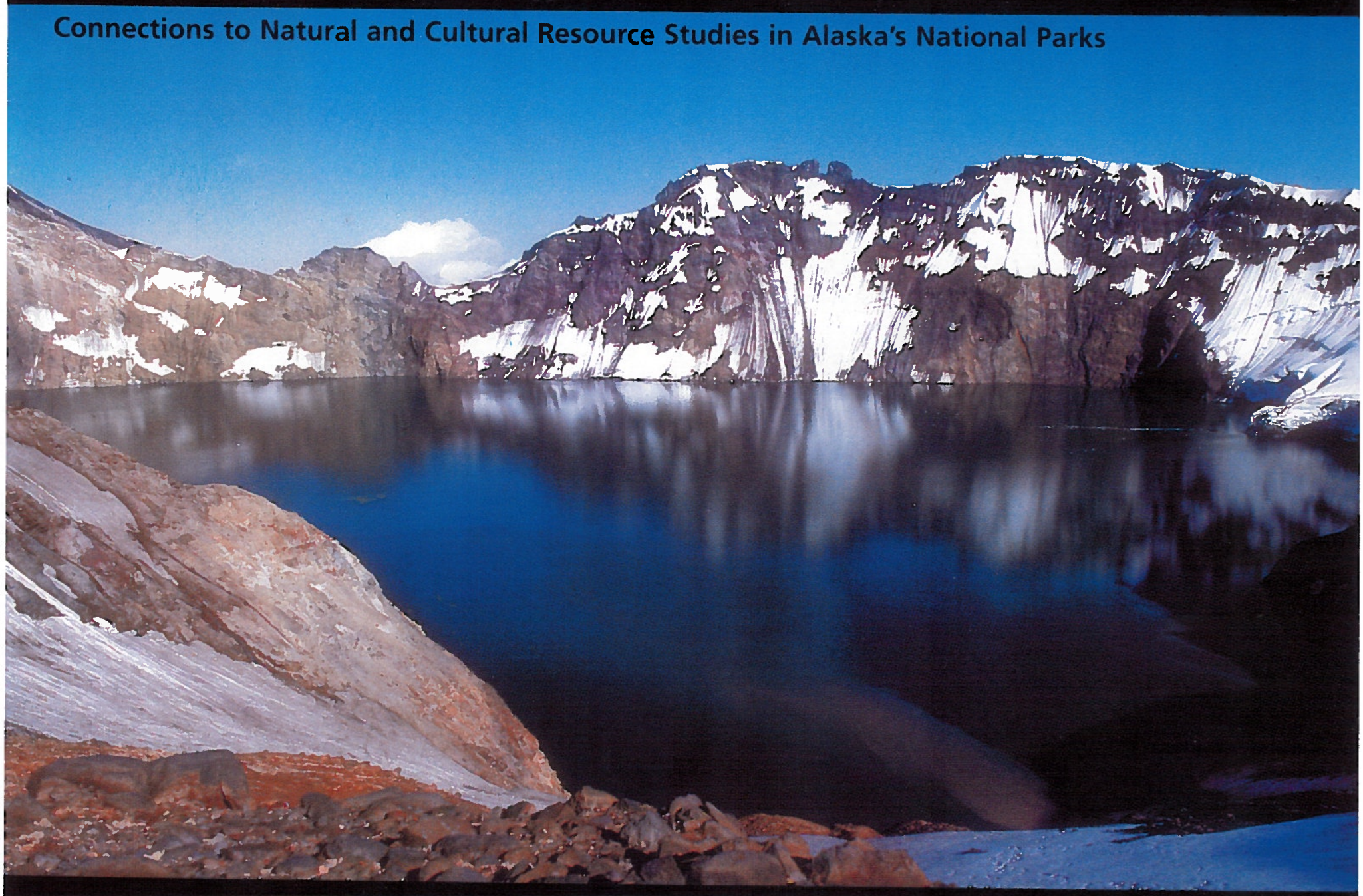
Alaska Park Science

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Alaska Support Office
Anchorage, Alaska

Connections to Natural and Cultural Resource Studies in Alaska's National Parks



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ALASKA NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Sharing Alaska's Natural and Cultural Heritage

"The act of creating a park is really an act of faith in all of the grand possibilities of the future. It is a contract with the future."
—Dr. Shirley Malcom, National Park Advisory Board

Welcome to our first issue of *Alaska Park Science*. This new semi-annual journal will share what we are learning in Alaska's national parks through the study of their vital cultural and natural resources.

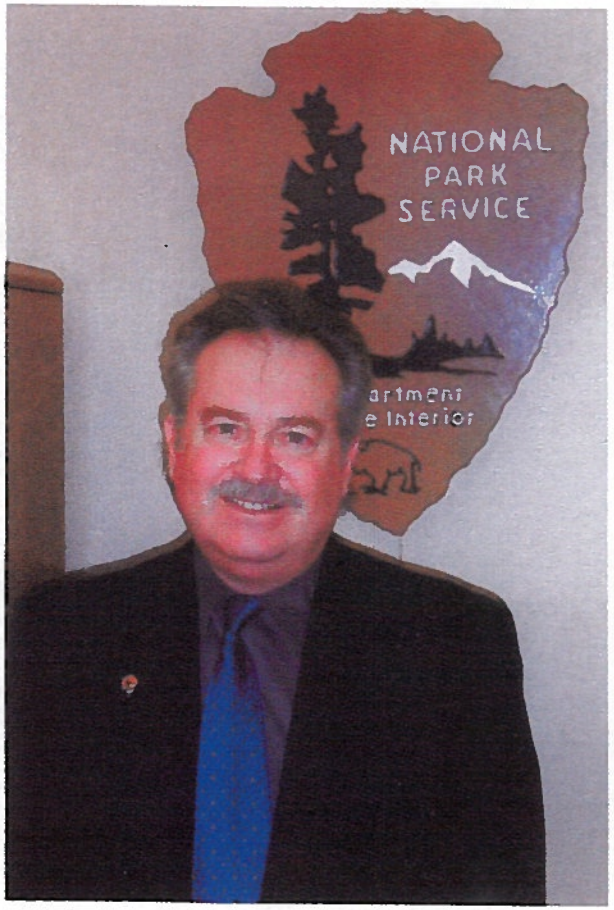
Some of the best places in this country have been chosen as parks. These places are landscapes and historic shrines in which we feel wonder, reverence, respect —and responsibility. We are immensely proud that such places exist and that we are successfully preserving this natural and cultural heritage for future generations. As concepts of American ideas and values evolve, protecting living ideas is gaining prominence nation-wide. The National Park Service not only protects places, but also the ideas they represent.

Sharing these ideas and what we have learned in our resource studies is essential. The National Park Service strives to connect education with research and science, for education can serve as the bridge between knowledge and responsibility. Education tools like *Alaska Park Science* will also serve as the connection between the public who own the resources and those given the responsibility to manage them. The National Park system has been called "America's greatest university without walls." The benefits of almost 400 sites in this "university" system will enrich the educational offerings provided to the public.

National parks are important scientific laboratories, in addition to providing fabulous places for people to visit. Because they are among the places least changed by people, parks provide unique research opportunities. Nationally, this role has been advanced by the National Park Service's Natural Resource Challenge, an effort funded by Congress to expand the scope and quality of science in parks. Alaska has benefited from this initiative and from the many partnerships built around expanding and sharing the knowledge gained in park areas. Research by the US Geological Survey-Alaska Science Center, universities and other agencies is also providing new insights into the world around us.

As part of our "contract with the future," *Alaska Park Science* can connect the public with their national parks and the natural and cultural resources found there. Alaska's national parks serve to teach, inform, inspire and motivate people. In the end, we hope the national parks will inspire and encourage people to make a difference.

Rob Arnberger
Regional Director, Alaska Region
National Park Service



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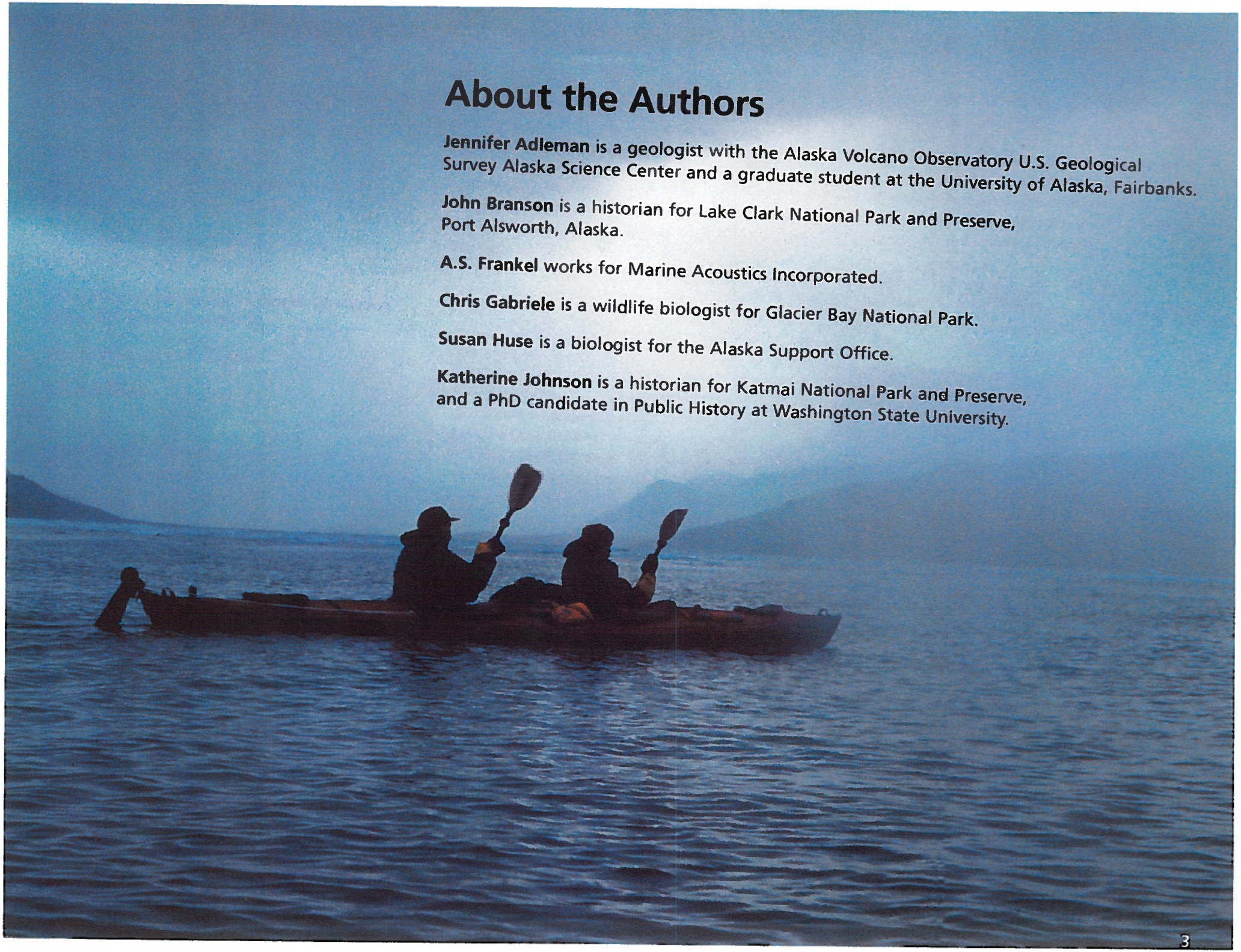

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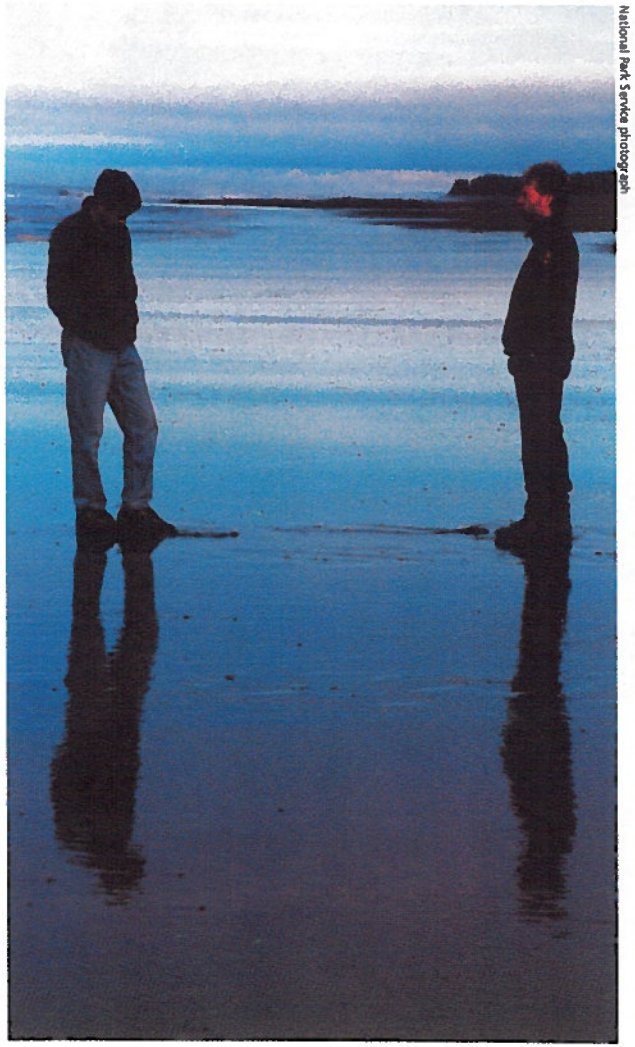
Photograph courtesy of Alutiiq Museum and Heritage Center



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